

VZCZCXRO3319  
OO RUEH DU RUEHMR RUEHRN  
DE RUEH KI #1126/01 2621622  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 191622Z SEP 07  
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6916  
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAHINGEN GE PRIORITY  
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK PRIORITY  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0529

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 KINSHASA 001126

SIPDIS

//CORRECTED COPY - CORRECTION IN THE SUBJECT LINE//

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/18/2017  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [CG](#)  
SUBJECT: KABILA TO P-3 PLUS 2: ONLY OPTIONS FOR NKUNDA'S  
FORCES ARE BRASSAGE OR DEMOBILIZE

KINSHASA 00001126 001.2 OF 004

Classified By: CDA: SBrock. Reason 1.4 (b, d).

¶1. (C) Summary: President Joseph Kabila met September 13 with ambassadors/charges of the P-3 (France, UK, U.S.) plus 2 (Belgium and South Africa) countries in Kinshasa. SRS G William Swing also participated. Swing had requested the meeting on behalf of the P-3 plus 2 because of growing concern over the Nkunda rebellion in the province of North Kivu and the GDR C's step-up of military action to crush the insurgents. In a "rehearsal" prior to the meeting with Kabila, P-3 plus 2 reps had agreed to raise also Security Sector reform (SSR) and humanitarian concerns in North Kivu. Kabila was adamant that the Nkunda insurgency was a military problem, albeit with political dimensions, but acknowledged his approach to the problem would not necessarily be only military in nature. He referred to a new plan to be table at the Tripartite Plus meeting two days later in Kampala to isolate Nkunda politically and diplomatically but did not give details. He also criticized the ex-FAR (FDLR), affirming they were a root cause of instability in North Kivu. He asked P-3 plus 2 reps to help their governments to re-evaluate the situation vis-a-vis Nkunda and to treat him as other "criminals of war" had been treated. He criticized donors for inaction, claiming the DRC had the "opposite of donor fatigue" in that it was tired of unfulfilled promises for development assistance. Defense Minister Diemu made rambling, unconvincing remarks about inadequate preparation for the upcoming international SSR round table. The meeting was remarkable for at least two reasons: Kabila clearly has rethought his strategy re Nkunda, demonstrating a new willingness to try negotiation and eschew military action, at least for now; and he has openly accused the FDLR for its role in fomenting instability. End summary.

¶2. (C) The meeting with Kabila had been requested several days before by Swing, with P-3 plus 2 concurrence, to discuss the previous week's escalation of violence near Sake resulting in MONUC intervention to separate FARDC and Nkunda forces. The President's office called in Swing alone on Tuesday. Swing reported that Kabila was surprised to find just Swing, asking where the P-3 plus two ambassadors were. Ambassadors were then called and asked to come immediately to the President's office, only to be told upon arrival that the President could not see them. The meeting was rescheduled for Thursday. On Wednesday evening ambassadors met with Swing to coordinate their demarche. At that meeting Swing speculated Kabila wanted to ask ambassadors to ask Rwanda to stop supporting Nkunda as he had heard that Kabila had asked

Mbeki to talk with the Rwandans. (Note: This was corroborated during the Wednesday meeting by the South African ambassador). Swing then asked ambassadors for suggestions as to what issues the group should bring up with Kabila. France asked that we raise Security Sector reform (SSR). UK supported this and also suggested we raise issue of the growing humanitarian crisis created by FARDC,s failed attack against Nkunda last week.

13. (C) The September 13 meeting was chaired by Kabila; also attending on the RDC side were Foreign Minister Mbusa, Defense Minister Diemu, Interior Minister Kalume, presidential advisor Ngwej, and acting protocol chief Mayuma.

The P-3 plus 2 delegation included the ambassadors of South Africa, the UK and France, and the Belgian and U.S. charges. Swing led off by commending the President and his team for recent diplomatic initiatives vis-a-vis the DRC's regional partners, mentioning visits involving Congolese officials and counterparts from Angola, Congo Brazzaville, the Central African Republic, South Africa, Rwanda and Uganda. He then went to the heart of the matter: "Everyone is concerned about the situation in the east, particularly the useless suffering there, and we know that this is a great distraction for you because you have so many other important matters to deal with." He then commented on MONUC disarmament/demobilization efforts in Ituri, which were proceeding well, and on the fact that efforts to achieve stability in South Kivu were also moving in the right direction. Swing ended with a question: "How do you see things and what can we do to better help you?"

Essentially a military problem  
-----

14. (C) Kabila responded quickly, skipping the usual opening courtesies: Before offering solutions to a problem you must identify the problem. The North Kivu problem had many aspects: political, diplomatic, military and ethnic. It was

KINSHASA 00001126 002.2 OF 004

also important to refrain from globalizing the problem; the problem is limited to North Kivu. Above all, this is a military problem, although with time it has also become a political issue. Nkunda's forces should go to "brassage" (the integration program designed to bring rebel forces into the regular Congolese army) but they have refused to do so. It is an ethnic issue because the majority of Nkunda's forces are Rwandaphone; they see things from a Rwandaphone perspective.

Brassage or demobilization  
-----

15. (C) Kabila (continued): The word 'negotiation' frightens us ("nous effraie"), it fills us with fear lest it become a precedent. We did not negotiate with Chinyachinya (sp?), we did not negotiate with Yakutuma (sp?), we did not negotiate with Ngololo (sp?). There is no agreement with Nkunda, we signed no agreements with him. The only options for Nkunda's forces are brassage or demobilization. Our only condition for Nkunda's forces is that they contribute to stability; this is not possible when they are undertaking military actions. Our message is clear: We want peace, with our neighbors, and within our borders to have stability and development. To that end we have launched a diplomatic initiative that my foreign minister will talk to you about. And in 48 hours we will take part in the Tripartite Plus meeting, with three ministers and two governors on our delegation.

The ex-FAR are also at the root of the problem  
-----

16. (C) Kabila (continued): There will always be political conflicts. Even in Rwanda, with only two ethnic groups, there was genocide. In this country, with 250 ethnic groups,

we take steps to calm tempers. We must be careful at the upcoming inter-communal conference on the Kivus (he did not give a date) to not legitimize tiny groups that are hiding from the law. Louise Arbour, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights told me there was too much impunity in the DRC. I say, therefore, we must punish. There is another great problem. The ex-FAR (FDLR) are also at the root of the problems in the Kivus. They have become refugees throughout the region, even as far away as Gabon. We are clear about this: they are approximately 6,000 in number and we must disarm them and repatriate them. We must also deal with Mai-Mai groups. The problem in the east is paralyzing the entire country but our determination remains firm.

Ambassadors reply  
-----

¶7. (C) Kabila asked if there were comments or questions. The French ambassador began: We want to help you as partners, not teach you lessons. There are many serious risks at the present time; these include greater ethnic conflict, a growing humanitarian crisis, and increased political polarization. We believe the current situation must be dealt with in a global fashion. It is important for the DRC to make known its intentions on the international stage. With regard to the ex-FAR, the international community can help. It is important to hold the inter-communal dialogue as soon as possible. We must all work to ensure that the gains in Ituri and South Kivu are maintained. Security Sector reform (SSR) is needed urgently. Again, regarding N. Kivu, the military aspect is important, but a global approach is required.

¶8. (C) Kabila (continued): Our three-point plan for demobilizing Nkunda's forces will be announced at the Tripartite Plus meeting in Kampala in 48 hours. We know about the humanitarian crisis. There are 600,000 IDP's; there will be famine soon and I am sorely pressed to find a solution. The international community is well aware of the situation and must play a great role.

¶9. (C) UK ambassador (in English): Again, the humanitarian crisis is of great concern. And I would reiterate that if a military solution is pursued too strongly . . .

¶10. (C) Kabila (in English): Our approach is not only military. The last round was not initiated by us but was imposed on us. The military option is always an option. If we don't take military action, they (Nkunda and his forces) will stay there forever. What can we do? Leave them there

KINSHASA 00001126 003.2 OF 004

forever? He who wants peace prepares for war.

¶11. (C) South African ambassador: Some time ago you cautioned the P3 plus 2 ambassadors not to press the alarm button on Nkunda. Our level of engagement has not necessarily been helpful. What are we doing we should not do, and what should we do that we are not doing?

Donors can do better  
-----

¶12. (C) Kabila: Capitals could do much better in their efforts to help us. Three things can be done:  
- Evaluate the situation correctly:  
    Who is Nkunda?  
    What does he want?  
    What interests does he represent?  
- Support fully plan we will present at Tripartite Plus.  
- Help us to move full speed ahead with SSR.

Kabila (continued): I am under no illusions. MONUC will leave one day. The important thing is not when MONUC leaves, but how the Congo is when they leave. Returning to the subject of Nkunda: Why do you not treat Nkunda as someone

wanted by the ICC?

¶13. (C) Kabila continued his comments about donors not living up to expectations. Clearly frustrated, he observed the GDRC had the "reverse of donor fatigue" and listed his grievances: We started our reconstruction efforts in 2003. We have presented plans and more plans. There is far too much bureaucracy. The going is too slow. If we are on a journey of 100 kilometers, we have thus far not walked even ¶50.

#### Security Sector reform round table

-----

¶14. (C) U.S. charge noted that when policy-makers evaluate situations in other countries they factor in press coverage because in countries with a free press, reports about human rights violations and humanitarian crises cannot be ignored. He also thanked Kabila for his affirmation of the importance of SSR, noting this was welcome news as several international partners were concerned that SSR roundtable preparations were behind schedule. Kabila asked Defense Minister Diemu to reply. Diemu gave a rambling statement about "misunderstandings," lack of cooperation from the Ministries of Justice and the Interior (responsible for trying suspects and the police forces, respectively), and assurances that the round table would be a great success.

¶15. (C) Kabila then asked Mbusa to speak about the plan to be unveiled shortly at the Tripartite Plus meeting in Kampala. Mbusa stated that the four members of Tripartite Plus, under U.S. facilitation, would meet soon. He was vague, stating only that the President's "brassage or demobilize" message to Nkunda was to be put before the Tripartite Plus with a request for that forum's support. He also asked ambassadors to urge that their capitals also support "The Plan." He did not mention the plan's "three points" as referred to earlier by Kabila. (Note: many present at the meeting later expressed disappointment at Mbusa's short and inchoate statement on the plan. End note.)

¶16. (C) Comment: After a short statement by Justice Minister Kalume about still uncertain plans for an inter-communal dialogue in the Kivus (para 6), Kabila announced that he had to leave to attend a press conference. P-3 plus 2 ambassadors and SYSG Swing (without U.S., because of other commitments) met later in the day to discuss the meeting with Kabila. They told U.S. charge that all agreed that two things about the meeting with Kabila were particularly important:

- (1) Kabila appears to have backed away, at least for now, from a military offensive to take out Nkunda, opting instead for a diplomatic effort to isolate him through the Tripartite Plus and in European capitals. The Europe part of this strategy includes a quick trip to London, Paris, Brussels and Berlin by high-level advisors, including special advisors Antoine Ghonda and Marcellin Tchishambo, and Chief of Staff Raymond Tshibanda, who together left Kinshasa September 11. Kabila himself will go to Brussels September 20 to meet with Belgian and EU officials, as well as with Congolese expatriates. He will then go on to New York for the UN

KINSHASA 00001126 004.2 OF 004

#### General Assembly.

- (2) For the first time Kabila has publicly criticized the FDLR (ex-FAR), accusing them of undermining stability in the east and demanding their demobilization and repatriation. This may be in response to calls by Europeans and others to take the wind out Nkunda's sails by eliminating his pretext for fighting the FARDC, but Kabila may also be calling the bluff of the same Europeans by challenging them to cooperate in the anti-FLDR fight. (Note: It is no secret the FDLR receives considerable financial and moral support from Hutus living in Europe, some of whom are suspected of involvement

in the 1994 genocide. End note.)

¶17. (C) Comment continued: Kabila's forceful presentation at the September 13 meeting (a performance he repeated shortly afterwards at the press conference) suggests he is growing into the job. He not only appeared to know significantly more about the substance of the issues than he did just a few months ago, he is also engaging on those issues. Just as importantly, he appears to understand the complexities and nuances of the issues and, based on changing realities, can modify his position. Finally, we were impressed with Kabila's verbal acumen, in both French and English. For someone who was not educated in French, his mastery of the language of Moliere is downright impressive. And the English he learned while growing up in Tanzania is idiomatic and articulate. End comment.

BROCK